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June 1. Frederic Cliffe.	Oct. 12. Dr. A. C. Mackenzie.
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## The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 1890.

## FACTS AND COMMENTS.

We elsewhere print an account of the meeting which was held at the German Athenæum on Saturday last, under the presidency of Sir George Grove, to support the proposed scheme for the purchase of the house at Bonn in which Beethoven was born. It is scarcely necessary that we should express our entire sympathy with this method of honouring the memory of the great musician, or our belief that no more fitting person could have been found to direct the English share in the movement than Sir George Grove, who

has done more than any other living man to make Beethoven understood amongst us. There is in all such schemes a danger that the scientific, or rather the "Dryasdust" element may be introduced, with the result of making the public estimation of their hero tend towards the academic or antiquarian; but it is hardly to be feared in the case of an individuality so potent as that of Beethoven. As will be seen by the report, it has been determined to give a concert in London during the ensuing season, which Dr. Joachim will be asked to conduct. The proceeds—which should be very considerable—will of course be devoted to the general fund for the establishment, in the house of his birth, of a Beethoven museum.

Mr. Henry Arthur Jones is an admirable dramatist, but not always an equally good critic of æsthetic matters. In the first of his two recent utterances—that before the Sunday Society, to whom he discoursed on the way to be rightly amused at the theatre—he spoke much admirable sense, dwelling with special happiness on the difference between the imaginative suggestiveness of great art and the literal imitateness of inferior art. "All art," said Mr. Jones, "that deceives you into taking it for nature itself is inferior and comparatively worthless." But alike in this lecture—not, by the way, then given for the first time—and in his speech on Saturday night to the Playgoers' Club, Mr. Jones fell, in the consideration of two points, into parlous error. The drama, said he, was like a traveller crossing the desert to the Promised Land under the guidance of a dragoman—which is the Playgoers' Club. Accompanying the wanderer, was a little page, who, falling falling sick, died *en route*, which things are deeply and darkly, but not beautifully allegorical. For the page, it seems, has to be dug up every now and then to do duty successively for the various dead or decaying forms of the drama, which, says Mr. Jones, should be buried where they lie. Now hereupon we ask questions as follows: Where, or what, is the Promised Land of the Drama? Who appointed the Playgoer to be the Drama's guide; and in what possible accurate sense can the page, as a form of the drama, have any existence apart from the Drama itself?

With a view to saving time we will answer our own questions, thus: Firstly, Nowhere; secondly, Nobody; thirdly, Nohow. Or, to speak with the seriousness befitting the question and the distinguished writer with whom we are at issue, we will suggest that for the drama there can be no absolute perfection until the social and artistic conditions under which it exists are perfect also. Plastic in its essence, there can be for it no point of equilibration, no permanent perfection; nor can any distinction be drawn between the abstract idea of the drama and its concrete existence. At any epoch the particular form assumed is, for that period, the drama, and by no accurate thinker can the "page" be conceived of as existing apart from the "master" of Mr. Jones's parable. And as for the second question, we deprecate most strongly any admission on the part of the dramatist that he is the servant of the public. It may, unfortunately, be true that the artist is often driven to make a compromise between his own ideals and the public demands, but to assert the fact as an axiom of art is at once to lower the standard. Nay, if report be correct, Mr. Jones himself has confessed this, for he has announced that he is writing a play, *not* to order, but to suit himself and to fulfil his own intentions. This is as it should be, and proves that Mr. Henry Arthur Jones is, after all, greater than he knows.

The complacent pessimist who would assure us that modern conditions of life render heroism or virtue—which are much the same thing—impossible must be sorely puzzled to account for the

existence of the noble woman who, giving up herself and all that the world calls happiness, has gone out to Molokai, there to carry on the splendid work amongst the lepers inaugurated by Father Damien. To face swift death in a sudden impulse of animal bravery—this is an infinitely smaller thing than the surrender of one's self to a loathsome life, or rather, a lingering and ghastly death. "Sister Rose Gertrude" desires to take a pianoforte with her to afford some amusement to the miserable sufferers, and a subscription had been opened by the editor of "The Pall Mall Gazette" to raise the necessary funds. We are glad to learn, however, that Messrs. Broadwood, with timely and characteristic generosity, have presented an upright grand of the class which they consider most suitable for the purpose. The subscriptions hitherto received will therefore, after the cost of carriage is defrayed, be devoted to the purchase of such additional comforts as Sister Rose may desire.

\* \*

M. Arsène Houssaye, in the behind-the-scenes recollections of the Comédie Française, of which a translation has just been published, gives us some highly interesting details of that famous institution, which he directed with so much success from 1849 to 1856. Concerning the mission of the stage M. Houssaye discourses pleasantly enough, although he has, perhaps, nothing to say of remarkable freshness. It is of no use, says he, to govern the Théâtre Français—or, presumably, any similar place—for the people, who have a holy horror of Alexandrines, and kick against the exalted teachings of master-minds. And here is a statement which—*although*, we believe, true—will doubtless commend itself to Mr. Whistler: "When art shall be brought within the appreciation of everybody it will no longer be art; democracy is not fond of summits—when it scales the mountain it is to knock it down." It is, indeed, too true that the "average man," accustomed to the placid levels or gentle hills, cannot breathe the keen pure air of those highest peaks on whose towering heights Art finds her home. It will not be out of place, considering how exercised are many just now on the question of the relations between the State and the stage, to quote M. Houssaye's views thereon: "I am in favour of the liberty of the theatres, together with all other liberties, but I like the protectorate of art. If dramatic art be not stamped with the seal of the State it is no longer aught but industrial art, and will eventually be no art at all. Because, seeing that the stage is only a school like any other, the State should watch over it and confer its mark on it. I belong to those who believe that no Government is hostile to the theatre. The theatre, therefore, has nothing to fear from any Government soever—be it called Republic, Empire, or Monarchy. Is there, in fact, a single masterpiece which but for the Government would have been able to see the light? Louis XIII. allowed Molière to be a Republican. Louis XIV. allowed Molière to be a Freethinker. Louis XV. allowed Voltaire to say any and everything he pleased. Louis XVI. allowed Beaumarchais to make the Revolution. This is the history of the theatre in France up to the nineteenth century. Hence the theatre has nothing to fear from the tyranny of the powers that be; genius pierces through wherever it may be, like the sun dispelling the clouds of the censorship. Still I would ask for a protectorate, not for a tyranny. I go further still, and would ask for laws against tyranny. A protectorate would allow a dramatic author to speak more directly in the name of France, but the protectorate should not become an act of blind despotism. The censorship may, in the name of offended morality, demand the suppression of certain words, nay, of certain scenes, but it should never suppress a piece."

Madame Jane Hading, who ought to know something about the question, has lately been discoursing to the readers of "Galignani" concerning the salaries of actors and singers. Of course we knew a good deal of it before, but the poor journalist, it seems, is never tired of writing, or the public of reading about the subject. There is reason for the former, since he is probably the worst paid of all brain-workers. He who—so Mr. Stead says—moulds the fortunes of the world and sways the passions of earth's multitudes with the wave of his quill makes at the utmost a paltry thousand a year; while Patti makes as much by singing a couple of songs. A contemporary moralising on the statements made by Madame Hading, asks pertinently why we should pay such enormous sums to our singers and actors, while the infinitely greater artists of our fathers' times were content with salaries such as, judged by modern standards, would seem ridiculously small, and adequate only for a fourth-rate provincial ranter. Rachel started at the Théâtre Français at £160 per annum; Talma played for £12 nightly; and to-day we pay to those who are not worthy to be named in the same breath with these, sums which by comparison are enormous. Can it be that the public appreciation of art has advanced to such a tremendous degree? It would be a comfortable thought, but —!

\* \*

Musicians of every clime and nation will thrill with pride to learn that the phrase "Grand Old Man," now identified with a distinguished statesman, was originally applied to the composer of "The Messiah." It occurred in a speech made by the late Dr. Hook, vicar of Leeds, to a working class audience assembled at a popular concert in Manchester. "I dare not," he said, "allude to the sacred oratorio, 'The Messiah,' as merely an entertainment and an amusement, for I remember that when the oratorio was first produced in London, and Handel was congratulated on having 'entertained' the town for a whole week, the grand old man, in his usual outspoken manner, said, 'I did not wish to entertain the town; I wished to do it good.'"

\* \*

Advertisements make us acquainted with strange things and theories. The strangest that has recently come under our notice is a full page advertisement, in an American contemporary, of an Album of Thirty-One Piano Classics. Premising that "by a Piano Classic we mean a Piano piece of Classic Beauty"—a modest definition enough—the advertising firm gives the name of each piece included in the album—attaching thereto a description or criticism of the composition. Thus of H. Lichner's "Gartenlied" it is remarked airily, "Any song sounds well in a garden. This is a graceful one." The sentiment is more than questionable. Then of a Drinking Song by Ch. Mayer it is said, "Such crystal pure harmony is easy to drink in, and not a little refreshing." The gem of the collection, however, is the following description of a Theme by Moskowski, Op. 10: "This one page theme is too brief, but is easily lengthened by the skilful player, who knows how, by repetition, sequences, &c., to make a good three page piece out of a one-page composition." Evidently that writer never heard of such a thing as respect for a composer's intentions.

\* \*

The following, too, may be set down amongst the curiosities of advertisement, for criticism it is hardly to be called. An American firm having produced a new grand piano, procured a Miss Markstein to play on it before a select audience of friends. A reporter on the staff of a musical paper having gushed suitably about the instrument itself, thus delivered himself concerning the lady's performance. We invite attention specially to the breath-

less and unpunctuate enthusiasm of the report:—"But, of course, Miss Markstein was the 'star,' and her playing was simply grand. Her already well-earned reputation in metropolitan musical circles is so well known that it would be useless here to attempt a criticism. Suffice it to say that she surprised all who were present, and brought out melodies and displayed intricate executions that would be doubted as possibilities by those who heard her were not the evidence before them."

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Peter Cornelius's opera, "The Barber of Bagdad," having recently been performed in New York, the following passage from a criticism thereon by Mr. Krehbiel may be read with interest:—"For those who are willing to permit cleverness of dialogue and ingenious and refined musical wit and humour to make up for poverty in action 'The Barber of Bagdad' is a most fascinating musical comedy—a comic opera in the best sense of the term. Its horizon is not wide, its feelings are not deep, but in every respect its expression is so apposite and sincere, the characterisation so ingenious and truthful, that no one whose tastes rise above the commonplace is likely to find his interest lagging. After all, of the constituents of an opera, action—at least that form of it commonly called incident—is most easily spared. Progress in feeling, development of the emotional element, is indeed essential to variety of musical utterance, but nevertheless all great operas have demonstrated that music is more potent and eloquent when proclaiming an emotional state than while seeking to depict progress toward such a state. Even in the dramas of Wagner the culminating musical moments are predominantly lyrical, as witness the love duet in 'Tristan,' the close of 'Das Rheingold,' Siegmund's song, the Love duet, and Wotan's farewell in 'Die Walküre,' the Forest Scene and final duet in 'Siegfried,' and the death of Siegfried in 'Die Götterdämmerung.' It is in the nature of music that this should be so. For the drama, which plays on the stage of the heart, music is a more truthful language than speech, but it can stimulate movement and prepare the mind for an incident better than it can accompany movement and incident."

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The Musical Artists' Society held its annual general meeting on Tuesday, the 21st. Three new members of council were elected, as required by the rules, viz., Mr. Aguilar, Mr. Geo. Gear, and Mr. Walter Macfarren. Six of the last year's council were re-elected, viz., Mr. Banister, Mr. A. Gilbert (hon. secretary and hon. treasurer), Miss Oliveria Prescott, Mr. Thorne, Mr. Stephens, and Mr. Weschè. Some little clearing up of the wording of the rules was gone into, although the principles were not changed, notably as to tickets, and as to works to be performed. On the latter point the rules now stand that composing members bring forward their own works—executant-members works *not necessarily by members*; while associates may bring forward their own works subject to the approval of the council. The points were fully discussed and carried unanimously.

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Otto Hegner's American tour, disastrously though it ended, was not without some amusing incidents. Here is one. It appears that at a concert in Albany the child had finished his piece and left the platform, but the audience clamorously insisted on "more." The conductor stepped to the front and explained that the boy had travelled 500 miles since 11 o'clock the night before, and suggested that he should be allowed to rest, but his closing words were drowned in a burst of applause. Mr. Oliver took it for an expression of utter defiance to his caution; it was in reality a welcome

for the little musician, who, unseen by Mr. Oliver, had come back to the stage, slipped behind him, and taken his place at the piano. The applause stopped, and Mr. Oliver, thinking that the audience at last had come to its senses, gave the signal for the chorus to rise. Then half a dozen of the ladies cried, "But there's Otto!" The expression on the conductor's face when he turned and saw the little fellow at the piano was a study. He left the stage-front with considerable haste, and took a seat at the back with visible embarrassment.

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Verily the discoveries of man are infinite. We all knew that beef-tea, especially that of the Liebig Company, is a cheering and non-inebriating draught; but a medical authority has lately been assuring us that there are special reasons why musicians should regard the concoction with great favour. In the first place it makes a "night-cap" of a much more wholesome and soothing kind than whiskey or any other spirit, and is therefore well adapted for musicians returning over-tired and excited from a concert. And furthermore, the beef-tea is said to impart tone and strength to the mucous membrane and the whole vocal apparatus, at the same time causing no irritation or excitement of the nervous system. These things should cause musicians to bless altogether the name of Liebig, and might perhaps yield a beautifully alliterative title for a new lecture on "Music and Meat."

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The Thursday evening meetings of Mr. J. H. Bonawitz's Choral and Orchestral Society have been discontinued, but the gatherings on Tuesday evenings will still take place. That of next week, being the anniversary of Mozart's birthday, will be devoted to performances of selections from that master's works. The programme will include the overture to "Titus," the "Ave Verum," "Kyrie," and "Gloria" from the 12th Mass, the Fantasia and Sonata in C minor, and the Trio in G—that played by Chopin, with Franchomme and Alard, at his last concert in Paris. The meeting takes place in the Queen's-road Assembly Rooms at 8:0.

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Mr. Charles Fry will give a recital of the "Merchant of Venice," with Sullivan's incidental music, on Thursday, January 30th, at 8 o'clock, at the Hampstead Conservatoire Hall. There will be a small orchestra under the direction of Mr. Bertold Tours, and the part song, "Tell me where is fancy bred," specially written for Mr. Fry by Signor Pinsuti, will be sung.

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Mr. Norfolk Megone has been appointed conductor of the Private Banks Musical Society. The society, in which Messrs. Rothschild are understood to take an active interest, has decided to admit ladies to the orchestra. Concerts will be given at the Princes' Hall during the season.

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The Meistersingers' Club, which has been closed for decoration and extension of premises, will re-open early in February. The re-opening will be celebrated by a house dinner, followed by an orchestral and vocal concert, under the direction of Mr. Norfolk Megone.

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The 26th Middlesex (Cyclist) Volunteers gave a very successful smoking concert at Clapham on Thursday, the 16th inst. Amongst those who contributed to the evening's entertainment were Mr. Richard Temple (late of the Savoy Theatre), Messrs. Manfred, Fisher, Gilberton Smith, E. Tremayne, and Captain Holmes.

We are glad to hear that Dr. Mackenzie, though still far from strong, has made real advances towards convalescence. He has been obliged to cancel all evening engagements for the present, and was consequently unable to be present at the banquet to Dr. Turpin on Wednesday evening.

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Mr. Augustus Littleton has joined the R.A.M. Committee of Management, which cannot fail to profit by his excellent business qualities.

### BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

BY OLIVERIA PRESCOTT.

Surely Aladdin's wonderful carpet never transported its owner to such a marvellously new world as did the Great Western train the other day when it took me to the Bristol Conference of the National Society of Professional Musicians. My own little life of music is a very quiet one, chiefly comprised within the walls of my study, from whence I look out as from a watch tower upon the struggles, the sorrows, hopes, and joys of my fellows, having those of my own which they perhaps have little knowledge of. What wonder then if I sometimes sat in a corner and gazed at the busy workers, feeling like an owl suddenly dragged from his twilight and thrown blinking into broad daylight.

Many excellent things might follow from an association such as this. Surely the best one is the personal intercourse of those of different natures, different positions and localities who yet have the same main object in view. To feel that that teacher from Northumberland, that organist from Devonshire, that theorist from Lancashire, or that composer from Kent have each had speech with ourselves or heard ourselves speak is to give a reality, a life to our profession. To hear all of them give their views and their experiences of things that we have been interested in, and to give in turn our own differing views of the same things, is to brighten our perceptions and to broaden our sympathies in a way impossible otherwise. Then the simple friendliness—to have one leading London professor take our railway ticket down, and another see after it coming up; to have our luggage dragged out of the van by another, our letters fetched by one celebrated organist, our wine ordered by another; to sit at breakfast, luncheon, and dinner within hail of gentlemen and ladies from all the eight corners of England, whose faces and names we gradually learn, and who all exhibit a friendly readiness to pass the salt and the mustard, and to converse on topics other than the weather, who tell us at first speaking the spot they come from, and expect the same from us—all this is to feel that we are brothers and sisters in the world, helping one another without pushing our own selves to the front.

A formal report of the proceedings has been made elsewhere, but a few thoughts raised by some of the events may be interesting; perhaps also some hitherto unrecorded facts may be noted.

The music performed at the *conversazione* on the first evening, though more limited than might have been expected, yet was representative of the thoroughness of the work to be had from members.

A fine old room was the Merchant Venturers' Hall, in which the opening meeting was held. Dark panelled walls hung with full-length portraits of previous mayors in their robes, a handsome fireplace with white marble mantelpiece, and on the side opposite several long, wide windows which opened out to the paved street. In this room were we all packed like eggs in a box, and just as precious; great thoughts teeming in our brains were waiting to be hatched out into speeches. Mr. Prout's paper on "Counterpoint" was very interesting, yet I do not think he varied, except in a few trifling points, from the scheme set out in Macfarren's book, which he cordially acknowledged as beginning to work in the right way. Both writers have the same broad principle. When I first began to learn the subject from Professor Macfarren, long before he wrote his book, he said, "I want this study to be a help and not a hindrance to you, that you may have nothing to unlearn when you are writing your compositions." Therefore he bade me write my own subjects for counterpoint, and in the modern diatonic scales. It is the same principle that Mr. Prout urges, and a very noble, liberal principle it is, too. But when some of our friends began to argue that we must give up counterpoint or melodic study because of its unnecessary fetters, which we had to throw off when we took

to music proper, the thought arose that, to be consistent, we must not begin the study of harmony with a limit of common chords because when we came to real music we should want augmented sixths and dominant thirteenth, and such like. Fetters indeed! Say rather a gracious permission to do only what our limited knowledge is equal to, and to learn a subject by degrees.

We all, brothers and sisters alike, were pleased with the champagne supper given to us by Sir Geo. Edwards after the concert of the Madrigal Society. We thought "old music is good, notwithstanding the anti-contrapuntists, but modern hospitality is also good when it is of this kind." Rather inclined were we, instinctive and unreasoning musicians that we were, to smile at the strict regulations as to our progress from concert room to supper room; as some of us smile at the "fetters" of the contrapuntal school. Nevertheless, when the score is to be as full as the supper room was that evening it is necessary to regulate the entry of the subject (Table No. 1 and its guests); for if it should run heedlessly against the countersubject (the guests of Table 2) it is easy to perceive that there would be a row of consecutive fifths and unresolved discords along the narrow passage. It is obvious to the greatest anti-contrapuntist that the entry of the episodes, of the stretto, and all the other guests would then be impeded, and the drawing of corks and carving of chickens would be confused.

I must be forgiven if my similes run upon hospitable or gastronomic lines. Music and meals have been blended throughout the four days. We have drunk counterpoint with our tea and coffee, and eaten harmony with our food; we have thought of diatonic chords while the fish and roasts were going round the tables; the tapioca pudding, neither salt nor sweet, though very wholesome, has seemed to us like the second inversion, so considered by many among us; the jam-tarts have reminded us of diminished 7ths; the pepper has made us sneeze in augmented 6ths, and the currant jelly tasted of chromatic appoggiaturas. Even the dreamful night's rest has been as the burden borne upon a long drone bass, interrupted by the chime of the cathedral clock and closed by the noise of boots dropping and the arrival of the hot water in the morning.

One of the most touching of the beautiful compositions sung to us by the two vocal societies was that of Dr. Hiles, "Hushed in death." Some thought "we like his practice better than his preaching." For that he will forgive us. The influence of the music upon us was a proof of the living influence of the old style of art in which he had written it.

"Hushed in death the minstrel lies,

Mute and tuneless on the willow  
Hangs the harp his touch could thrill,

But yet his soul is with us still."

How many thoughts did those words bring to us who were listening! How many friends came back to us in thought! Old friends who had worked hard with us, suffered with us, joyed with us; old friends who had taught us, helped us, and encouraged us to do bravely and thoroughly. Ay, and they are with us still, helping us to do braver and better for the thought of them and their work. One thing I know, that in the second and private discussion on counterpoint, when every argument save one had been put forth, and a weak woman rose up from her quiet corner with knees trembling and lips quivering at the clapping, it was nothing but the remembrance of the old master who had proved, to her experience, the value of the study that enabled her to stand to her point and put it as clearly as she knew how.

Some merriment came out of a discussion on fingering. There seemed to be a difficulty in distinguishing between fingers and thumbs. What anatomists call the *opposition* of the thumb to the fingers was scarcely appreciated. In advocating the use of the thumb upon the black keys of the pianoforte equally with that of the fingers the relative shortness of the former was quite overlooked, also the fact of its being at right angles with the fingers when the hand is over the key-board, so that it strikes the key with the edge of the nail instead of the top of the finger. Doubtless a great deal of the antipathy to the German or Old English numbering, as Mr. Cummings says it is, arises from a dread of being confused with our hypothetical ancestor, the monkey, who is weak in the thumb. There is also a dread lest any one should point the forefinger of scorn (which is not the thumb) at us and say all our fingers are thumbs.

May we meet again in such friendly wise!

## THE PERFORMING RIGHTS QUESTION.

Although the French Government has conferred on Mr. Alfred Moul the title of Officer of the Academy in recognition of his efforts to secure to French authors and composers the right to impose fees for the publication and performance of their works in this country, it is evident from the following extract, which we translate from "Le Ménestrel," that the step is not likely to meet with anything like unanimous approval in musical circles of the highest culture and influence.

"Under the heading 'French Art in England' we find in a recent number of 'Gil Blas' the following:—

'Since the French, by virtue of the Berne Convention, have begun to impose a royalty on the performance of modern French works in England, English composers are making their fortunes,\* with Sullivan at their head, who now prints on his scores, "These compositions may be performed at concerts gratis." Moreover, the principal London publishers, Messrs. Cramer and Boosey, have published a notice that all their vocal music may be performed in public free of royalty.'

"This little paragraph teaches us a lesson.

"Our readers probably remember that more than a year ago we explained in some detail the dangerous situation which the Agent-General of the "Society of Musical Authors, Composers, and Publishers" would create for French music in foreign countries by carrying out the untoward notion of establishing offices for the collection of performing fees every time a work of French origin was performed there, whether at a concert or public ball, just as is done in France. We then pointed out to him that the measure seemed likely in course of time to compel foreigners to exclude French works entirely from their programmes, and to confine themselves to Italian, German, or English works, which could be performed free of toll and from the vexatious interference of a taxing agent. This result would be really grievous at a time when, after great efforts, French publishers had succeeded in assuring to French music the position which it deserved to occupy in every land.

"One might as well have spoken to a deaf man. Not that M. Victor Souchon—for that is the agent-general's name—is not a highly interesting gentleman, but his mind was made up; he was imbued with the lofty notion of ruling worlds, and determined to override all interests rather than renounce the idea. And, besides, was he not returning from England? The English were with us, from Sullivan, the great national composer, downwards; for he was ready to accept the post of honorary president of the English branch. M. Souchon had also interviewed the chief representatives of the English music trade, who heartily encouraged his plan, and he even showed with some pride a collective letter with their signatures attached, which we certainly considered the neatest hoax that John Bull has ever perpetrated on a rival. They practically said to him in this letter, but in the neatest possible way, "Pull the chestnuts out of the fire and we shall be delighted to eat them," and Souchon declared himself enchanted with it.

"Well! Now his eyes are beginning to be opened. Here is Sullivan, perfidious Sullivan himself, beginning to announce lustily that all his compositions may be performed gratis, and here are the bigwigs of the English trade, our agents' crafty accomplices and backers, hastening to seize the opportunity to profit by his mistake and to proclaim with sound of trumpet that any work published in their catalogues and belonging to them may be performed for nothing. Truly the trick is a capital one. French music is swamped once more. Our interests are damaged, and, what is worse, we are at the same time perfectly ridiculous. John Bull may well rub his hands.

"M. Victor Souchon still had this argument: that in England—the country where he intended to make the first experiment—proceedings would be taken only with the greatest caution. He simply expected a repetition of the story of "the man who was persuaded to have himself guillotined." After one action he would never take another. Where would be the necessity? Would not every manager of a concert or ball be only too happy to be executed and to pay? It would only be necessary to show them the text of the Berne Convention—that famous Convention in which there is a good deal of bark but no bite—every signatory nation having taken good care not to compromise the interests of its countrymen, and to take back with one hand what it gave with the other. England is far too prudent not to have taken its own precautions. She has "laws of internal administration" which will give one agent a good deal of trouble to get

\* We wish it were true!—Ed. M.W.

over, for these laws declare in precise terms "that no future international agreement shall supersede their provisions in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the people. What then becomes of the advantages of the Convention of Berne? And this is the reason of the vague rumours I have already heard as to proceedings to be taken for the defence of French rights. If these are true the society will know before long what it costs to dabble in English law. Three or four cases a year would soon make an end of the annual subscriptions, which are even now very slow to come in. To look at a solicitor is certain and speedy ruin.

"At the same time it must not be supposed that M. Souchon's idea is radically bad. It is perfectly right that a work should bring its author as much profit as possible wherever it goes. But that is not the question. What we think mischievous is the means by which M. Souchon tries to bring this about. It is not for us Frenchmen to start French agencies in foreign countries; they will always be looked upon there with a suspicious eye, in the light in which we ourselves should look upon German agencies if they were established amongst us. This method of procedure will meet with insurmountable obstacles. We must wait for time to do everything for us, and leave every country, as they certainly will do, to found national agencies of their own on the model of ours; and then we shall have nothing to do but to get ourselves admitted to them, just as we ourselves admit foreigners into ours. A reciprocity of this kind could not be refused to us. Such would have been the practical and legitimate means of gaining our ends. Doubtless M. Souchon would have lost a few commissions by it, but how much the general interest of the society would have gained.

"Not content with actually squabbling with England, it was decided at the last meeting to extend the quarrel to Germany too. The society will only be satisfied when it has shut all markets to French music. What will be the result of all this? It is very easy to prophesy an early split in the society. On the one side the composers who write for café-concerts and public balls will be left to discuss their own interests by themselves, and on the other a new society will be formed which will give up squabbling over halfpence, and will perhaps take up the more noble and elevating cause of art."

## IN A WINTER CITY.

BY LOUIS N. PARKER.

The life of a master in a public school is made up of holidays interspersed with intervals of work which are called terms. During the term he works assiduously, sometimes as much as nine hours in a single day, at cricket, lawn-tennis, or football, according to the season, while he wearies his brain by nightly poring over the most obtruse problems of the science of whist. Also, when winter comes round, he has added to his other labours the perilous adventure of skating. This winter the wind in my corner of the world has blown persistently from the west, so that violets and primroses have shown their premature heads, and the inopportune pea has won for itself a paragraph in the local prints. There has been no skating; and as I hunger for hard work I could ill brook being defrauded of one of my duties. Behold me, then, on board the Flushing packet, bound for Dresden. Here let me at once say that winter is undoubtedly the time for a trip on the Continent. If you travel in summer you are nobody, because everybody travels; but in winter you are decidedly somebody, because there is nobody else. Stewards, porters, custom-house officials, guards, waiters, cabmen, are prostrate at your feet, and form a carpet on which you can make your triumphal progress from one end of Europe to the other. Moreover, you feel that you are travelling. The fur coats of the guards are alone worth the money, and give you a general impression that you are a Queen's Messenger engaged in conveying a piece of wedding cake to Her Majesty's representative in Central Russia, and you remember your trivial summer tours with a scornful shrug of the shoulders. To be sure it is rather lonely, and after you have had twenty-six hours of railway and steam-boat entirely to yourself you are ready, as you step out of the station at Dresden, to embrace the first person you meet and hail him for a brother—or sister.

The last day of the old year saw me in London; the first of the new greeted me in Dresden. Where I was at the turn of the year it is impossible for me to say, as all the clocks on the line kept on getting twenty minutes away from each other the further I went. At Leipzig the entire

Saxon army had got into the train; there was the New Year's Day reception by the King in Dresden, and these magnificent creatures were going to attend it. The consequence was that I had to go cableless to my hotel. How I skated that afternoon, how I skated the following days until the thaw came, how weird the Elbe looked with great blocks of ice floating slowly down it, how I loafed the thaw away in picture gallery and museum or in little trips to Meissen and Saxon Switzerland, all these are facts of great moment to myself, but which my readers might possibly consider singularly uninteresting. This is, little as one might think so thus far, a musical article, and I will at once fall to serious business, and narrate my musical experiences during a fortnight's stay in this glorious winter city.

They began on the first day of my arrival with a performance of Auber's "Masaniello." I am not very well up in the chronicles of opera in England, but I wonder how many of the younger generation of musicians have heard this opera? That is the beauty of life in a busy German town: you get everything, and the student has opportunities for a comparative study of all schools. There is not very much to say about this particular performance. As all students of opera know, the work is remarkable for the fact that the principal female part is dumb. This character—Fenella—was admirably represented by Fräulein Hofschüller, the first ballerina of the theatre and a most excellent pantomimist. Grace and expression were alike most satisfactory. Dresden has acquired a new tenor—at least I have never seen him before. His name is Riese (which, being interpreted, means giant), and he is not quite five feet high. The Dresdeners are all madly in love with him, but to the impassive stranger this affection seems strangely misplaced. He is a valiant little man with a big voice, but he is no actor, nor does it add to the probability of the plots in which he figures to see a hero of his inches floor a giant of average height with a single blow of his sword. Besides this his voice production is bad, and he makes rather more noise when he breathes than when he sings.

JANUARY 2ND.—"GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG."—A dreadful thing is happening in Dresden, and, indeed, the court theatres all over Germany are suffering from the same complaint. No, it is not influenza; that is but an episode; its name is Wagner. That obnoxious genius has taken possession of all the stages, and his are the only works which bring full houses. I am not romancing, I am speaking the sober truth. In Dresden the problem is daily becoming more serious. When Wagner is not played the theatre is empty: the moment a Wagner drama is put up every seat is sold. This is a grave situation. You can't go on playing Wagner every night, yet the public will come to nothing else. The public themselves write letters to the papers expostulating with themselves for staying away from such masterpieces as "The Prophet," "The Ratcatcher," "The Trumpeter," &c.; but they stay away all the same. I am going to offer an explanation and a suggestion later on, so I will at present pass by, merely noting the fact. There is no doubt that the Dresden Theatre is a great Wagner Theatre. Outside Bayreuth I know of none where I would rather see Wagner's works performed. The Intendant is determined to keep up the well-earned reputation of his establishment. Already there are three of the greatest Bayreuth artists on his staff—Miss Malten, the tenor Gudehus, and that unsurpassed artist Scheidemantel. Presently Friederichs, the only Beckmesser, and Hofmüller, the only David, are to be added. Herr Schuch is a great Wagner conductor, though I have a little quarrel with him which I shall air by and by; and the orchestra is, without any reservation, superb—as, indeed, it may well be, considering that such *virtuosi* as Rappoldi and Petri are the leaders, and Grützmacher, who led the 'cellos to victory in the historical first performance of the "Ring" at Bayreuth, performs the same office here. This particular performance was shorn of some of its glory by the absence of Miss Malten. She had been seriously ill, and for eight weeks the Dresden stage had missed her. There is, however, among the enormous staff of the theatre a new artist, who, I am convinced, is destined before long to rise to superb eminence. I am glad to be the first to call attention to Fräulein Wittich. She is young, she is earnest, enthusiastic, and modest; she has a commanding and graceful presence, her voice is rich, round and equal, her pantomime is graceful, and will, with a little more thought and study, acquire the necessary clearness of expression. She is, moreover, if I may be allowed to mention so personal a matter, very beautiful. In short, she is a true Bayreuther, and I hope soon to greet her in the hill-side theatre. The Siegfried of Herr Gudehus is well known, and retains all its high qualities. With him also I have a pretty little

quarrel which I will save for later. As Hunding, Herr Scheidemantel has little to do, yet he is able to show us how great and noble an artist he is. On the whole, the male impersonation which stands out in the greatest relief on this evening is the Hagen of Herr Decarli. This is all the more remarkable as Decarli is not considered among the first flight of Dresden artists. His Hagen, however, is certainly a very remarkable achievement, and entitles him to a higher rank in the Dresden Theatre than he seems to occupy. All the minor parts were adequately filled, the chorus was splendid, the stage-management excellent, and the scenery quite satisfactory. Now then, can anybody tell me why the great introductory horn-scene was omitted, and why a perfectly senseless cut was made in the orchestral interlude known as Siegfried's Rheinfahrt? Not more than twenty minutes were saved by this barbarous proceeding, and it made one uncomfortable for the rest of the evening for fear that at any moment another cut might come.

(To be continued.)

### FRANZ LACHNER.

There are now few, if any, such links left between the musical world of our time and the great days of Beethoven and Schubert as that which was suddenly broken on Monday, the 20th inst., by the death of the venerable Franz Lachner, at Munich. Lachner had been the pupil of Simon Sechter and the Abbé Stadler, an acquaintance of Beethoven and the intimate friend of Franz Schubert. Born on April 2, 1803 (not 1804, as often stated), at Rain, a little town in Bavaria, he was about six years younger than his friend Schubert, and he might have heard the first performance of the Choral Symphony or that of Weber's "Euryanthe." His musical instruction began about the years 1810-15, for his father was an organist, and would lose no time in teaching a promising boy: then for some years he studied at Neuburg and Munich, settling at Vienna in 1822, where he soon became acquainted with Schubert, who was then just emerging from obscurity. Little is at present known of their intercourse, but it may be hoped that Lachner has left some reminiscences of the illustrious composer, of whom he was one of the few intimate companions. Kreissle v. Hellborn, in his life of Schubert, gives a letter of Lachner's, inviting Schubert to come to the production at Pesth of one of his (Lachner's) operas, "Die Bürgschaft"—oddly enough the name of an opera by Schubert himself, which had never been produced;—but Schubert was dying at the time, and he was never able to answer his friend's letter. About this time (1828) Lachner was appointed chief conductor at the Kärntnerthor Theatre of Vienna, a post the duties of which he discharged with great credit till 1834, when he became Kapellmeister at Mannheim. He had already written much music of an ambitious character, and in passing through Munich had an opportunity of getting a symphony in D minor (his third) performed there, which was so much admired that it procured him the offer of the post of Hof-Kapellmeister, which, however, owing to his engagement at Mannheim, he was not able to accept till two years later, in 1836. For nearly thirty years from that date he was the recognised chief of musical matters in Munich, and the record of his activity is highly creditable to him. But towards the end of this period he came into conflict with the disciples of the new Wagner-Liszt school, a school which Lachner, an out-and-out classicist, utterly abhorred. The growth of the doctrines of this school made Lachner's position more and more uncomfortable, and in 1865 he retired on a pension. But this termination of his official career did not affect his activity as a composer: indeed, a great many of his best works were produced in the following years. Still his age, and his increasing lack of sympathy with the tastes of the rising generation caused him to fall a good deal into the background, and it is to be feared that his death will not now attract the attention which is really due to a person with such solid claims on our notice. His works include music of almost all kinds. Besides the early opera mentioned above he produced three others, "Alidia" (Munich, 1839), the story of which is partly derived from Bulwer's "Last Days of Pompeii," "Benvenuto Cellini" (Do., 1840), and "Catarina Cornaro" (Do., 1841); this last was far the most popular of the three, and had for many years quite a considerable reputation. But the best of his vocal works appears to be the "Requiem" in F minor, Op. 146, which was produced at Leipzig in Nov., 1871, and was universally admitted to be an extremely fine work, full of deep feeling and profound musical

science. He has also written two oratorios, "Moses" and "The Four Ages of Man," a Stabat Mater, several masses, psalms, motetts, part-songs, and choruses. It was, however, in instrumental music that he first acquired a high reputation, one of his symphonies (he has written eight altogether) having gained a prize at Vienna in 1835, while another (the sixth) has been praised in warm terms by Schumann. Better known than the symphonies are his Suites for orchestra, of which he has also written eight, and of these it may, perhaps, be said that the second (in E minor) has a reputation in South Germany little less than classic.

Besides the suites he has produced a great deal of chamber music, including a nonett, and several quartetts, quintetts, sextetts, &c., together with some pieces of quite exceptional character, such as a serenade for four celli, an elegy for five celli, and others. In fact, it would be almost impossible to name any sort of music which he has not written, for his works number about 190. Lachner was pre-eminently a "learned" musician; his mastery of counterpoint was complete, and perhaps he was too ready to display it; his creative faculty was much less conspicuous, and this may help to explain why, on the whole, his later works are more successful than the earlier ones, for he had then learnt better how to disguise or compensate for the want of the gift which was lacking to him. Few of his works have been performed in this country—in London, at least. The catalogue of the Crystal Palace concerts only includes three of the suites, the latest performance being in 1876; and in that of the Popular Concerts the only item is a Prelude and Toccata for piano, played by Miss Dora Schirmacher in 1877. It might be wished that there could be a sort of committee of taste, who should select from the works of deceased composers a few specimens calculated to keep alive their memories. Without some such arrangement it is to be feared that most of the works of Lachner will before very long be totally forgotten.

### THE ORGAN-GRINDING NUISANCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL WORLD."

SIR: I have been away from home, so have only just seen the correspondence in your columns anent the organ-grinding nuisance. I write to say that I shall be very glad to sign any petition, or help in any way to abate this abominable infiction that we are obliged to suffer from. I hope that others will join in any effort that is made in this direction.

January 17, 1890.

Yours obediently,

"MUSICUS."

P.S.—A short time before Christmas I was disturbed three times during a counterpoint lesson by barrel-organs. The third man was an Englishman, who treated me to some very pleasant language when I ordered him to move on.

### WAGNER AND THE "MASSES."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MUSICAL WORLD."

SIR: In the current number of your admirable paper reference is made to the five hundredth and fifth concert given by the "People's Concert Society." Significant of good work well done as are the facts you quote, there was one circumstance in connection with the entertainment immediately preceding the one referred to by you which, if you will allow me to state it, will, I believe, be found even more indicative of the progress music is making amongst the "masses." At the five hundred and fourth concert held at Westminster Town Hall on Sunday, Jan. 5th, the programme included the whole of the great duet from the third act of "Lohengrin." This, I am informed, was the first occasion on which such a large selection from Wagner had been put forward at these concerts. Miss Marianne Rea, one of the vocalists on the evening in question, had, however, frequently sung such excerpts as "Elsa's Dream" and "Elizabeth's Prayer" with the result of being invariably met with a demand for more. Thus it was that the committee were led into making the present experiment. Of its complete success there can be no doubt. Supplied with a clear account of the drama, the words sung being printed in *estenso*, the numerous audience followed every note of the long duet with the closest attention. At its conclusion the applause was loud and long continued, and it may safely be predicted that whenever and wherever the committee can command the services of such intelligent singers as Miss Marianne Rea and Mr. John Probert and repeat or add to their Wagnerian selections they will justify still further the title of the society.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

London, Jan. 20, 1890.

ONLOOKER.

### THE GROSVENOR GALLERY.

There is on exhibition at the above gallery a collection of pictures and statuary the subjects of which are all more or less connected with English sport, while a number of trophies and some fine specimens of the armourers' craft, lend their aid, to make more complete an exhibition of "Sport illustrated by Art." We will confine our remarks to the first mentioned features, the pictures and statuary, and although we are compelled to begin with a confession that it is not the highest art which has been dedicated hitherto to sporting subjects, yet there are among the works on view, more than one which may be mentioned as interesting in treatment, as well as in subject. The chief burden of the "artistic" lies with Sir Edwin Landseer, who is represented by some of his principal work, in addition to a large number of sketches. The most important of the famous animal painter's pictures is the well-known "Monarch of the Glen," of which we can only say that it is a straightforward piece of painting, with all the chief care centred in the monarch. Rubens' "Wolf Hunt," a large work, is rather ideal than imitative. It is a record of confusion, in which, besides a couple of wolves and some foxes, several hounds appear in imminent danger of death, from being trampled on by the horses of a gay cavalier and a lady companion who assists. As a composition the work is curious. The lady seems indifferent to, or unconscious of any danger; her companion does not even deign to glance at a wolf; the killing by weapon is left to a dismounted spearman, and the excitement natural to the scene is concentrated in the figure of a horseman who advances towards the spectator. The painting is—well, Rubens-like. Sir Francis Grant's "Ascot—Meet of H.M. Stag-hounds," is not without interest. In the first place it is the work of a P.R.A., and it contains such portraits as those of Count d'Orsay, Lord Chesterfield, and other celebrities who rode with "the Queen's" of their day. The landscape is not unpleasant, showing a just appreciation of tone and feeling for atmosphere. "A Hare," by Albrecht Dürer, is well worth inspection. It is a curious conceit which has shown the creature crouching in a carefully arranged group of field flowers, while a number of butterflies hover round her, and various insects assemble at her feet. There is a great deal of expression, however, in the animal, which would tell of the painter's naturalistic tendencies, as do also the squirrels close by. These latter are painted on vellum in water-colours, and are finished with elaborate care. A more important work from the same hand, "St. Hubert," is, alas! too dark to be criticised; a close examination is necessary before its details can be appreciated at all. "Innocence Alarmed" is the title of a Morland, which helps to illustrate the stilted absurdity that marked the period of its invention. The "Flash in the Pan" describes in a more reasonable manner, a subject which has given the painter an opportunity to show a cottage interior well painted, and two or three figures treated as unpretentiously as Morland alone could treat them. There is one feature in the work which appears irreconcilable with nature, the fact of the light which enters by the window being far stronger than the full daylight which we see through the open door. Of all the hunting scenes, perhaps none is more true to nature, and certainly there is no more artistic record, than Randolph Caldecott's "Three Jovial Huntsmen." This broad piece of work is full of character; there is expression in the attitude of each old sportsman, there is expression in the heads of all three horses, and in each tired hound who "plods his weary way," while the landscape glows genially as if to harmonize with the kindly humour which gave birth to the subject. Courbet's picture of "The Roedeer's Retreat" is badly placed, and cannot receive the attention which a Courbet well deserves. Of the sculpture, which is all rather small in size, we say much in mentioning the names of Bonheur, Frémiet, Jacquemart, and Boehm. A "French Jockey," by the last named, is a wonderfully clever study, full of life and character, as his model of "Cremorne," with trainer, is full of motion and grace. "The Steeplechase," by J. W. Good, which shows three horses negotiating a jump, is extremely clever. The work is spirited, and the accuracy of detail achieved without loss of vigour, bespeaks an artist of no mean order.

W. P.

Mr. J. T. Field, who has hitherto been Sub-Warden and Honorary Treasurer of the Guild of Organists, has resigned the latter office, but still remains Sub-Warden. Mr. W. H. Stocks, of St. David's, Carson-road, West Dulwich, S.E., succeeds to the office of Honorary Treasurer.

## The Poet's World.

### SUNRISE.—AN OVERTURE.

#### I.

Music that gathers from a far-off dawn  
beyond the Sea.  
We hear the very veils of sleep withdrawn,  
and see the first cloud flush from dark to fawn  
of day to be;  
We feel the young wind thrill the silver air  
kissing the flowers,  
as hope may kiss the hectic cheek of Care,  
or as love may take a maiden unaware  
in summer hours.

#### II.

Methinks I see a cone of solemn hill  
enwreathed with gold.  
As though the land were vassal to his will  
He glows o'er each dim vale dreaming its fill  
of sweets untold.  
But hark! 'Tis the swell of strong wave as it sings  
nearing the shore,—  
like the long murmur of a million wings  
of eager birds on April wayfarings  
passing the Nore.

#### III.

And now I see both land and sea alight,—  
the great sun move  
straight from his sleep, abroad in glorious might  
to bless the sad old World with fresh delight  
and perfect Love.

ST. CLAIRE-BADDELEY.

### ADAGIO.

Space and dread and the dark—  
Over a stretch of livid sky  
Cloud-monsters crawling, like a funeral train  
Of huge primeval presences  
Stooping beneath the weight  
Of some enormous elemental grief;  
While in the ancient vacancy of night  
The far sea wanders with a sound  
As of the trailing skirts of Destiny  
Passing unseen  
To some immitigable and tremendous end  
With her gray handmaid, Death.  
What ghost, what spectre is this  
Thrilling the wilderness  
As with the bodily shape of Fear?  
What but the sense,  
The terror of the forlorn silences,  
The undeflowered loneliness,  
The dusty impotence, of the doom beyond?  
Life—life—let there be life!  
Better a thousand times the roaring hours  
When wave and wind,  
Like the arch-murderer in flight  
From the avenger at his heel,  
Storm through the desolate fastnesses  
And wild waste places of the world!  
Life—give me life until the end,  
That at the very top of being,  
The battle-spirit shouting in my blood,  
Out of the reddest hell of the fight  
I may be snatched and flung  
Into the everlasting lull,  
The immortal, incommunicable dream.

W. E. HENLEY. (*In the Scots Observer.*)

### TO AN ICONOCLAST.

"He (Dr. Hiles) felt it his duty to upset strict counterpoint by all legitimate means, even by laughter."—*Vide* report of N.S.P.M. Conference.

Although the grand old fane be nigh deserted  
Serene 'neath all attacks it smiles:  
Good counterpoint, we know, may be inverted  
But so, perchance, may Doctor Hiles.

The great musicians whom thou creepest after  
Revered that mightiest of piles.  
And wouldst thou shake it down with foolish laughter?  
Risk not thy lungs, good Doctor Hiles.

What says the Sphinx to desecrating 'Arry  
Who chips her—he can do no more:  
"Better to rear some trifle that may tarry  
Than strive to mar, yet fail to score."

### XENIEN.

#### XXIII.

##### THE TRIAD OF GOODNESS.

Love—to be Love—must have both Hope and Faith;  
And Faith must love, must hope, howe'er she's cross'd;  
Nor Hope, though wrestling to the last with death,  
Can linger long when Love and Faith are lost.  
These three—as one—must in thy life be shown,  
Or neither canst thou truly call thine own.

F. K. H.

#### XXIV.

##### A MON PARAPLUIE.

Ami commode, ami nouveau,  
Qui—contre l'ordinaire usage—  
Te mets à l'écart quand il fait beau,  
Et te montres les jours d'orages.

##### TO MY NEW UMBRELLA.

Kind and convenient friend of mine,  
So much unlike the many;  
You stand aloof when the weather's fine—  
And by me when 'tis rainy.

SIR WALTER STIRLING, Bart., of Faskine.

The late Sir Walter Stirling was a general favourite in English society, his genial brightness endearing him to all classes. He was born in 1802, and died 1888.

#### XXV.

##### ABSENCE.

Oft—when the heart grows callous to its bliss—  
Absence first tells us—how and what we miss.

P. Q.

#### XXVI.

##### DEGREES OF COMPARISON.

Say why should young people be wrongfully taught  
That 'smaller' is greater than small,  
Tisn't right to say 'shorter' is longer than short—  
And 'shortest' is longest of all.

D.

#### XXVII.

##### ENGLISH AS SHE IS SPOKE.

Say, shall I teach 'em how to speak? Nay—nay—  
I pry'thee, teach 'em how to hold their tongue.

E.

#### XXVIII.

##### EISIN HIATROI LOGOI.

Wrath's bad enough,—but don't become a fretter:  
'Tis silent hatred most corrupts the blood.  
Fight it well out in words: there's nothing better  
To clear the gall and do your spirits good.

D.

## The Organ World.

### MODERN ORGANS AND MODERN COMPOSERS.

BY F. GILBERT WEBB.

Much has been written concerning the orchestral capabilities of the modern organ. For years past organ builders have striven to produce faithful imitations of different orchestral instruments, and in many instances have succeeded to a remarkable degree in reproducing the peculiar quality of tone desired; the most costly and, it must be confessed in some cases, the most wild experiments have also been made to secure new "effects;" pipes have been increased in number and size until, as in the organ built for the Sydney Town Hall, we have a 60ft. "trombone," and indeed the summit of ambition of the modern organ builder would appear to be attained as the erector of the "largest organ in the world." Organists, too, availing themselves of increased variety of tone placed at their disposal and the many ingenious inventions and contrivances to facilitate execution and rapid changes of tone colour, have adopted a more orchestral style of playing, and nearly all well-known orchestral pieces have been "arranged" (many with questionable artistic propriety) for the organ; and performers, audiences and builders have joined in the chorus in declaring the organ to be the "king of instruments," or, as appeared in a recent programme, "The Monarch of the Concert Room."

Amid all this mutual congratulation, however, for much of which there is undoubtedly just cause, one fact, unpleasantly suggestive of a serious failing in the constitution of the mighty monarch, obstinately remains, viz., the neglect of the instrument by nearly all our greatest living composers. It may be reasonably advanced that mechanical imperfections deterred the "great masters of previous ages from giving the instrument their attention, or that most of them knew practically little concerning its capabilities." Such, however, cannot be said of modern leading composers, and if the progress claimed has really been made, and the modern organ is truly capable of so adequately representing the full orchestra, why have we not sonatas and symphonies for the organ by Brahms and kindred master minds? Why does the far less powerful and comprehensive piano—an instrument, be it remembered, of equally fixed tones—continue to incite the productive genius of our leading tone poets? The predilections of even such a brilliant organist and clever composer as Saint-Saëns distinctly incline to the more humble medium of musical expression. On an average quite half the pieces performed at organ recitals are arrangements of vocal or instrumental compositions, all of which suffer more or less by transcription. The organist is not wholly to be blamed for this; he cannot always be playing Handel's Concertos, effective though they be, or Mendelssohn's Sonatas, and few organists care to place more than one of Bach's fugues on a programme. It is true there is a large store of German organ music, to which it is satisfactory to note organists are now turning their attention; but though such writers as Merkel and Rheinberger have produced works of sterling merit and high artistic excellence it must be confessed that very much of the modern German organ music is exceedingly "dry," and does not yield commensurate results for the amount of practice required for its adequate performance. English organ music we have in plenty but very little of it can be called "great." It is chiefly remarkable for melodiousness and straightforwardness of conception and design—admirable qualities, but insufficient in themselves to constitute high artistic work for such an instrument as the organ. If we turn to the French school we have for the most part prettiness and effectiveness of a sensational character but a tone generally lacking in dignity and high purpose. Thus the organist of classical culture takes up Haydn's symphonies and Beethoven's sonatas or Mozart's chamber music—not always with happy results.

If there were a circulating library for organ works doubtless many fine compositions now resting in oblivion would be heard, and the present apparently somewhat limited repertoire of recital players considerably enlarged, but this would not disturb the fact that our leading composers do not increase the list of classical works for the organ. This seeming forgetfulness is the more remarkable since several of them began their careers in the organ loft. Sir Arthur Sullivan, when organist of St. Peter's, South Kensington, apparently derived much enjoyment from his instrument, to judge by his frequent and charming improvisations before

and after the services; yet he has apparently entirely forgotten his early regal friend.

A Sonata for the Organ, by Dr. Hubert Parry, a Concerto for Organ and Orchestra, by Brahms, announced for performance at the Albert Hall would rouse the interest of the most jaded musical critic, and we venture to say would prove attractive to a numerous portion of musical amateurs. Such accomplished musicians must well know the capabilities of the organ, and thus the reason of the non-appearance of such works would appear to be, not ignorance, but knowledge of the resources of the instrument, and this combined with the similar abatement of the older masters implies the existence of some inability on the part of the instrument to become the sympathetic medium for the transmission of the composer's intentions—which inability in spite of all "improvements" remains in equal force now as in the olden days; moreover, the instrument would seem to be most neglected by those minds who have been, and are, most successful in portraying and communicating the more subtle shades of thought; the defect must consist therefore of inability to express the delicate inflections of emotional fervour; in other words, its mechanism is still too imperfect to respond to many of the artistic promptings of the performer.

It is true that by means of the "swell pedal" and clever manipulation of the stops an organist can produce on some organs powerful crescendo and diminuendo effects; this, however, but little compensates for the power of producing various shades of tone in any one note of a sustained chord. Every note as it passes through the brain of the composer forms part of the development of some idea, is laden with some thought of different intensity to its fellows, and often carries the burden of some poetic fancy; and it is in the reproduction of these artistic impulses that the piano so far excels the organ in expressive power. A sympathetic pianist will rarely strike even the same note twice with an equal amount of force, not from calculation, but from the ever varying degree of mental stimulus passing from the brain down the nerves to the muscles, and faithfully recorded by highly sensitive mechanism. No such response is met with on the organ keyboard, the slight power in this respect which the old system of connection undoubtedly possessed having been entirely dispelled by pneumatic and electric actions.

Hence the organ, with all its ponderous growth and amplifications, has practically made little advance as an expressive instrument, and there is little doubt from this failing incites but languid interest in poetical and highly sensitive minds; and it is to be feared, since music is daily becoming more imitative of mental development, and seeks for expression in increasingly minute shades of tone, that until somewhat of the responsive touch possessed by the piano is acquired by the organ, most of the great composers will continue their neglect of this instrument.

Whether the power of producing shades of loudness from an organ by mere finger pressure be an impossibility or no must be left to future inventors to decide, but in this age of mechanical contrivances we may be permitted to hope that some more sensitive medium may be devised than that at present presented to the organist's fingers. Pianomakers have for years past been working at that which may be termed the other end of the problem, viz., increase of sustaining power for their instruments; and although the many ingenious inventions have all more or less practically failed, i.e., in maintaining a sound of equal power to that produced by the blow of the hammer, still the improvements in the tone and sensitiveness of touch resulting from these endeavours can only truly be estimated by comparing the modern concert grand with that of fifty years ago; and could similar progress in sensitiveness of tone gradation be made through the organ key-board the instrument would undoubtedly become the most powerful of all solo mediums of musical expression.

Until this is secured it is questionable whether in dragging the organ out of its acknowledged home, the church, for which its pure and solemn tones are so peculiarly fitted, and striving to make it a substitute for the orchestra in the concert room, we are not making a great artistic mistake, and whether in many cases the thousands of pounds laid out in these gigantic, but, as has been seen, imperfect instruments, would not be more advantageously employed, both pecuniarily and artistically, in forming the nucleus of an endowment formed for the support of an orchestra in connection with the concert hall. Be this as it may, it must be acknowledged that the modern organ does present certain means of securing powerful effects which entitle it to occasional remembrance by even our greatest composers, and though it may be incapable of delicate phrasing and the reproduction of subtle inflections, it will faithfully respond to massive harmonic treatment and contrapuntal writing. In short, the modern organ is

a king of instruments in its power of tone and impressive utterance, but it is as unresponsive to the wild passions of human emotion as the grandeur of the finest scenery.

### CHURCH CHOIR GUILD.

The second annual Conference was held in the Council Room of the E.C.O. on Thursday evening, Jan. 16, 1890, at eight o'clock. Sir George Elvey, Mus. Doc. (patron), who had kindly promised to preside, was unfortunately prevented by illness from doing so, but his place was ably filled by the Rev. Fredk. K. Harford, M.A. (vice-president).

The Conference opened with the Guild Office, following which came the chairman's opening address, which treated chiefly on the objects and work of the Guild.

The Hon. Sec. read the annual report, which showed that the Guild had made steady progress during the year, and that its present condition was hopeful and promising.

The present council and officers were unanimously re-elected, Mr. George Jellicoe being elected hon. treasurer.

The revised constitution which had been drawn up by the warden, registrar, hon. solicitor, and hon. sec. (Revision Committee appointed by the Council), and approved by Sir Herbert Oakeley, Mus. Doc., and Sir George Elvey, Mus. Doc., was read and adopted.

Several motions were proposed and carried, one to the effect "That a die be cast for medals and badge," and "That a branch of the C.C.G. be formed without delay in the United States of America."

The Chairman then pointed out the importance of this Union, and suggested that notice of this resolution be sent to General Marcus Wright, of the War Department, Washington, and the Rev. the Rector of Holy Trinity Church, New York.

The Warden gave notice that several competitions would be open to members during the present year, and announced prizes of three guineas and two silver medals, the adjudicators being Sir Herbert Oakeley and Sir George Elvey.

Canon Harford presented diplomas to the successful candidates at the recent examinations, which concluded the business portion of the agenda paper.

Mr. Frederick W. Wareham afterwards gave a lecture on his new "Method of Teaching Sight Singing from the Staff," giving practical illustrations with the aid of choristers.

Votes of thanks were then passed to Canon Harford, to the Warden, and to Mr. Wareham.

The meeting closed with the Guild Office, the priest's part being taken by the Rev. Chairman.

The new banner, which friends of the Guild have generously subscribed for, was displayed in the room, and elicited great admiration.

There was a very good attendance, several well-known musicians being present. Amongst the visitors was General Rodder, who, jointly with Generals Lee and Beauregard, commanded the army of the Southern States in the war of 1864-5.

### NOTES.

Sir Herbert Oakeley gave his 196th organ recital at the Edinburgh University on the 16th inst. The programme—attentively followed and evidently much appreciated by a large number of students—was of considerable interest, and included selections from the works of Bach, Handel, Haydn, and Beethoven, and a "Berceuse" by Hauser, which was encored.

Two organ recitals were given by Mr. T. Tertius Noble, organist of St. John's, Wilton-road, S.W., in St. Deiniol's Church, Criccieth, North Wales, at 3 and 7, on the 8th inst. There was a good congregation in the afternoon, but in the evening the spacious church was filled. Mr. Edward Owen, R.A.M., being unable to fulfil his engagement through illness his place was most ably taken by Mr. Thomas and Mr. Henderson, quarrymen from Pen-y-Groes, Carnarvon. Mr. Thomas is a promising young tenor; he sang with great taste and feeling "In Native Worth," "If with all your Hearts," and "Be Thou Faithful unto Death." On Monday and Tuesday evening Mr. Noble gave recitals on the great organ at the

Crystal Palace by the invitation of Mr. Eyre. The selections were from Bach, Guilmant, Reubke, and Dubois.

At St. John's, Wilton-road, S.W., on Sunday evening, the 18th, the Christmas portion of Handel's "Messiah" was given by the choir after the evening service, the Honble. and Revd. Richard Strutt, Vicar, himself conducting, Mr. Tertius Noble at the organ. After the Benediction a beautiful parting hymn was sung by the choir and congregation, unaccompanied, with considerable accuracy and effect. This custom, quite new to English churches, has been adopted by Mr. Strutt from the evening service at Milan Cathedral.

The Chapel Royal, Savoy, now closed for the installation of the electric light, will be re-opened on Sunday, the 13th prox.

### PROFESSOR ARTHUR DE GREEF.

Mons. de Greef was born at Louvain, in Belgium, on October 10, 1862, and is, therefore, notwithstanding his title of professor, quite a young man. Few pianists have at his age obtained such fame and honours. He developed at a very early age a taste for music, in consequence of which he received the most careful and artistic education that could be got, and was only nine years old when he received a prize for pianoforte playing. He then entered the Brussels Conservatory of Music, where he received lessons on the piano from Brassin, and in composition from Gevaert, the well-known director of the Conservatory; here he made such progress that when only fifteen years old he was appointed teacher at this institution in pianoforte playing and harmony. When seventeen years of age he gained the Gold Medal and the *diplome de capacité* of the Conservatory.

Soon afterwards he became acquainted with Franz Liszt, and had the honour of playing before him on many occasions. The great master was so delighted with the young man's playing that he dedicated a prelude and fugue to him and made him a present of several manuscript pieces. Mons. de Greef then began a series of *tournées* in Belgium, Germany, and France, and was everywhere received with great enthusiasm.

He was twenty-three years old when he was made Professor at the Brussels Conservatory on the death of Mons. de Zarembski, and since then his reputation has steadily increased in his native as well as in the neighbouring countries. Mons. de Greef is a great favourite at Court. He is generally invited once a week to the place; after dinner he plays duets with H.R.H. the Duchess of Flanders.

During 1887 and '88 he made most successful concert *tournées* in Norway with Mr. Alexander Bull, son of the celebrated Ole Bull, as his impresario, and last year he was sent by the Belgian Government to Bologna to represent his country at the Exhibition there, reaping laurels and renown everywhere. In 1887 he appeared at the two Scandinavian concerts in Paris arranged by Mons. Oscar Commettant, and last winter he again played in Paris, this time at the Colonne Concerts, the Parisian press being unanimous in his praise. "Le Siècle" said that his triumphs in Paris could best be indicated by the three classical words *veni, vidi, vici*.

One of Mons. de Greef's favourite composers is Edvard Grieg, and when Mr. Grieg last month appeared for the first time in Paris and conducted his own works at two of the Colonne Concerts Mons. de Greef was specially engaged to play the Concerto in A minor and other works at those concerts, and scored a great success. Mr. Grieg himself is simply enchanted with Mons. de Greef's interpretation of his works. In a letter to a friend, which we published a couple of months ago, Mr. Grieg says:—"De Greef is the best interpreter of my music I have met with. It is surprising how he understands my meaning. Whether I roam over the mountains or through the valleys, whether I am refined or coarse, he follows me with a wonderful instinct. I feel happy and honoured by his sympathy for my art. He is a real master, that I see more and more—just one of those whom you may look for with a lantern all round the musical world."

Mons. de Greef's *répertoire* is a very extensive one—if fact, as Mr. Grieg told the present writer a few days ago, "he plays everything." Last year he gave a series of "Historical Concerts" in Norway, which were attended with great success.

It is to be hoped that the London public will ere long have an opportunity of hearing this gifted artist.

H. L. B.



PROFESSOR ARTHUR DE GREEF.



## The Dramatic World.

### A MONOLOGUE ON MONOLOGUES.

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, 22ND JANUARY, 1890.

MY DEAR MR. FIELDMOUSE,—

Lying back in an armchair—and there is nothing in which the advance of civilization is more clearly shown than the armchairs of to-day: low, shallow, solid, magnificently comfortable, projecting one soles forward, in an angle of unimaginable obtuseness, towards the fire.

Lying back in an armchair, I say, how true and how profound one's thoughts are apt to be. One is calm, digestive; the answers to hard questions come naturally, because one does not put those questions with too much eagerness.

One question had often occurred to me—not of great importance, I admit, but yet a question asked and not answered: a thing irritating beyond measure to some minds, while to others—who love to be surrounded with riddles unread, to believe things *quia incredibilia*—it is as the staple of life.

So I had often thought—as a relaxation, after seventy-two hours of consecutive Schopenhauer—"Why are not monologues popular in England?" And that strong actress, Miss Amy Roselle, revived my thought, when she stooped to conquer the music-halls, and made as it were a little play of Tennyson's "Rizpah," and flung it at the "mashing" multitude of the Empire. (But, alas, she has not stood to her guns; she has now come down to the ordinary recitation—even to that, the most recited of all, wherein "cannon all round them volleyed and thundered.")

Still, I could but think how I should like to see her in a little play which she should have all to herself: indeed, not troubling to journey to the Empire, I did lazily—in my Dream-Theatre, of which that armchair is the one and only stall—watch some great artist, encumbered by and dependent upon no lesser actors, give me such a play. There is a fascination in the idea; and, besides, there is a legitimate ingenuity in the working-out of a little plot by one character alone, with no adventitious aid of heroines to be made love to, or heroes to leap through windows at curiously opportune moments.

The monologue is certainly not popular in the English theatre. Of late years we have seen one—Mr. Brookfield's "Nearly Seven"—and a very capital one too; but it was not altogether relished by the early pittite. This, however, was no doubt partly because the story was one which a British audience, in its infinite respectability, might consider just the least bit "risky." (Have you read Mr. Walter Besant on British Life in this month's "New Review"? Oh, dear!).

Yet the fact remains, that we have seen no English monologue but "Nearly Seven," in a full-grown theatre,—except here and there at a "benefit *matinée*"—for these many years. The monologue is *not* popular on the British stage, of a certainty. But why?

And here the calm sense of the armchair lazily answers our question by asking a wider one. "Why is the monologue not popular on *any* stage?"

For, ask the cultured friend who casts his *Coquelin* at your British head, and twits you with your unvaried polylogues—Did he ever see in Paris (where they make *Coquelins*), a monologue in the evening bill-of-the-play? I have been to the theatre in Paris pretty often; and to the best of my memory I never did—except perhaps, as aforesaid, for a benefit, probably in the afternoon.

No: as in England, so in France—and most likely in Germany, Italy, Norway, and Japan—the monologue disports himself in his natural *habitat*: the hall, the private room, wheresoe'er the Entertainer fastens on his prey. At a benefit, of course, a one-part play has its obvious advantages; here the artist is to a certain extent an exhibition—to quote that perfect epigram of Sarah Bernhardt's—and it is convenient to be able to exhibit your Irving, Toole, Ellen Terry, and Mrs. Bancroft, all in half an hour, with no trouble of rehearsal nor amiable differences as to the relative value of "parts!"

But otherwise—go to see a monologue at a theatre, after or even before a full-sized play, and when there is no reason that you should not see an ordinary duologue or polylogue: examine yourself and the rest of the audience: do you, do *they*—an inferior class, I admit—enjoy yourself, or themselves, very heartily? Is not this entertainment, of one voice talking for fifteen minutes—one small figure trying to fill a large stage—somewhat monotonous, a little "thin?" Does not your one-part play show, among its fullgrown companions, something as a sketch among finished pictures: does it not lack strength and completeness, and does not the connoisseur say "I should like to take this home and look at it *by itself*?"

I believe here is an answer found, to a question often asked. We have few monologues, principally because we don't want them. It takes two to make a quarrel, and at least as many to make a play; indeed, if you will think of it, the gist of nearly every play is a quarrel, and Acts I, II. and III. might generally be labelled "What it rose from," "How it was fought out," and "How it was made up." (A valuable suggestion for a theory of the Genesis of the Drama which I leave you, my dear philosopher, to develop by your country-fireside).

Two things, though, I would wish you to consider, if your advice should ever be asked upon this matter of monologues. First, the great superiority of the monologue proper, in its proper place, to the recitation: it is, as I have said, an ingenious little thing—like the heads carved on cherry stones to which Dr. Johnson (somewhat unhappily) compared Milton's sonnets—it is very complete, and it lends itself to, and needs, real *acting*, not mere elocution.

Second, the advantage of being illogical—an advantage which the practical English mind has always been quick to recognise. Be illogical, then, and if anyone asks you to suggest a monologue for the theatre, recommend a monologue *with several characters*. Do not think that I am condescending to a joke; there are plenty of them, and some years ago there was a fashion for such things. To give perhaps the most famous instance in Charles Mathews' "Patter versus Clatter" there were four or five people, but merely *pour donner la réplique* while the protagonist chattered and pattered.

How delightful it was—will you ever forget the sneezing song ("but he diddle!")—and how it gave one all the advantages of the monologue and avoided all its flatness! Even then it needed a Charles Mathews, and one only wished him to do all the work once in a way—but it was an enjoyment and it is a memory.

And, though the quaintness of the form lends itself more to comedy, there are serious little one-part plays of this kind. I have before me now a tiny drama written expressly for a Spanish actress, the Senora Civil, by her famous compatriot, Echegaray; and this I recommend to you quite disinterestedly, for I have not made an adaptation of it! It is called "*Bodas Trágicas*;" and though the Senora's part is virtually the whole of the little "dramatic picture"—as the author calls it—there are four other

people in it, two indeed anonymous, but all needing for their realisation actors and actresses.

That is a monologue as I—having yet no Irish blood in my veins—much prefer to see it!

Illogically but affectionately your

MUS IN URBE.

### THE DRAMATISTS.

#### XX.—KWAN-HAN-KING. "THE REVENGE OF TEOU-NGO."

By no means an extreme example of Chinese plays is this which we have chosen. It is, to begin with, founded on fact, and therefore—in its earlier acts, at least—much less fantastic than many of its fellows. Moreover, Kwan-han-king was probably the most practised of the Chinese dramatists, and had learned to avoid some of the crudities which we find in other masterpieces of the Celestial drama.

A "prologue" precedes the four acts of the "Revenge of Teou-ngo"; or, to put it more simply, the play is in five acts.

The first character to appear is a lady. She sings a little verse, and then tells us some facts. "I am Mrs. Tsai. Tsou-tcheou is my native country. My family used to consist of three persons; unhappily my husband died and left me with an only son, eight years old. We live together; I have money in my house, and enjoy an easy competence. In the neighbourhood there dwells a *Sieou-tsai*," (say a bachelor of arts), "named Teou, who last year borrowed twenty taels of silver of me. By this time the capital and interest come to forty taels."

And so forth; the Chinese dramatist is always determined to make everything perfectly clear. Moreover, he generally repeats each narrative at least three times.

The gist of Mrs. Tsai's story is that Teou cannot pay, but has a pretty daughter eight years old, whom she would like for her little son's wife. She is expecting them to call.

Teou enters, on his way to Mrs. Tsai, with his small daughter, Touan-yun. He says: "My family name is Teou, my surname Tieu-tchang. My ancestors formerly dwelt at Tchang-ngau; I am a native of the capital." He repeats the story of his debt, explaining that he is a literary man, a widower, and very poor—so poor that he cannot afford to go to the capital and pass the examination for his degree. But he has, with a great effort, resolved to let Mrs. Tsai have his little girl for her daughter-in-law, though he feels that it is like selling the child. In a really touching scene he gives up the girl to Mrs. Tsai, who remits his debt and gives him ten taels for the expenses of his journey.

In Act the First, thirteen years have passed. A doctor appears and says—"My family name is Lou; I have the reputation of being an excellent doctor. People talk of no one but Doctor Sai-lou. I inhabit the town of Chan-yang, and I have just opened a pharmacy near the southern gate." But he is very poor; he has borrowed of an old lady named Tsai ten taels—now increased by interest to twenty—and she wants it back. Mrs. Tsai was certainly a bit of a usurer.

She appears, and says:—"I am Mrs. Tsai. I formerly lived in the district of Chan-yang, where I passed a calm and tranquil life." But her boy, who at the age of seventeen married Touan-yun—whose name has been changed to Teou-ngo—died some three years ago. His young widow is faithful to his memory.

Suddenly the action becomes fast and furious. Sai-lou says that he will pay Mrs. Tsai's money if she will go to his farm. They take a few steps, are supposed to be there, and he straightway brings out a cord and begins to strangle her. But two men run in and he makes off.

Mrs. Tsai tells these men—Li-lao and his son Tchang-lu-eul—her story, and they promptly resolve to marry her and her daughter. She objects, and offers them money instead; but a threat of strangulation quickly converts her. To be brief, she consents, and tries to get Teou-ngo to consent also, but the young girl resists with quiet heroism.

In Act the Second Tchang-lu-eul—a brutal young fellow—forces, by threats of exposure, the Doctor Sai-lou to sell him some poison. Mrs. Tsai is ill, and Tchang-lu-eul bids Teou-ngo make some soup for her: into which he puts the poison.

Mrs. Tsai, as she is about to drink, is fortunately sick. She offers the soup to Li-lao, the father; he eats it and dies, and Tchang-lu-eul accuses Teou-ngo of having poisoned him.

The girl, who is very brave and calm, is tried before a corrupt judge, Tao-ouo. After Tchang-lu-eul's evidence the judge bids the usher flog Teou-ngo. She suffers terribly, and at last confesses the crime—but only (as afterwards appears) to save her mother-in-law from torture. She is doomed to be beheaded.

Act III. shows her execution. To prove her innocence she prophesies three miracles—the upward flight of her blood, a snowstorm (though it is midsummer), and three years of drought in Tsou-tcheou. And they happen.

Her father, Teou, begins Act IV. "I am Teou-tien-tchang," he says. "It is nearly sixteen years since I left my child. As soon as I arrived in the capital I passed my examination"—and he gradually rose to the rank of a judge of appeal.

He begins going through the records of sentences, and the first he looks at is that of Teou-ngo, who was beheaded three years ago. But he goes to sleep over it.

Teou-ngo's ghost appears, and there is a scene of sheer harlequinade. She keeps putting her record at the top of the pile, and shading the old gentleman's reading-lamp (which he snuffs in vain); for she says, "Since I am the daughter of a Criminal Judge, my rank raises me above those phantoms and shades which inhabit the air. Why then should not I place myself before this lamp? Why should not I cross this threshold?" After a while they have a talk; and she tells her father the entire story of the play all over again.

There is a fresh trial. The ghost accuses Tchang-lu-eul, who cries in terror "There's a demon! there's a demon! Take a pinch of salt and throw it into the water!"

The Doctor Sai-lou is found, and his evidence condemns Tchang-lu-eul. Then says Teou to the ghost: "I see now the falsehood of the accusation of which you have been the victim. You may retire." Which—after a little song—the ghost is about to do, but pauses to say, "I had forgotten one thing. Father, Mrs. Tsai is old; take her in"—and care for her. This he promises.

"Well," says Teou, to conclude. "I am Teou-tien-tchang. The ghost which was here just now was that of my daughter"—and when he thinks he has made all this quite clear he dooms Tchang-lu-eul to be cut into one hundred and twenty pieces.

### NOTES AND NEWS.

"If you want a thing done, do it yourself," is a proverb with at least a proverb's customary share of untruth. Carried out at all fully, it sins against the great modern law of the division of labour; and many and many a failure has been caused by it. Yet it is natural enough that, for example, a clever young actress like Miss Annie Irish, anxious to do something stronger than London has yet seen her do, should hit upon the plan of writing a part for herself—especially if, coming across a novel whose heroine interested her, she thought "here is my story ready made." But, unfortunately, a story is not a ready-made play; and to place even the easiest of novels upon the stage requires a good deal of skill, and, for the most part, a good deal of experience.

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Not that Miss Irish has shown herself lacking in skill in her adaptation of "Across Her Path" (a novel by Annie S. Swan), which was produced on Tuesday afternoon at Terry's Theatre. There was, indeed, very little that was noticeably crude or maladroit in the play, and one felt the author's inexperience chiefly in the absence of novelty; a beginner is of necessity almost always conventional. The story, however—to dismiss it, as one fairly may, in a sentence—was ruined by its entirely inadequate and extremely stagey motive.

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But the curious point was that Miss Irish had not by any means done the thing she wanted for herself. Her own part, though very long, was anything but strong; was not, indeed, so good as three or four others in the play. There was, to begin with, a very truly-drawn Scotchwoman, played to absolute perfection by that admirable Scot, Mrs. E. H. Brooke; there was an elderly *grande dame*—of a type now done to death, it is true, but yet effective on the stage; there was a villain—naturally acted by Mr. Pagden—who at least, like most stage-villains, knew what he

wanted and "went for it," there and then. Each of these was a better "part" than the heroine, whose character was indistinctly drawn, and who really gave Miss Irish, with all her humour and all her power, very little chance of impressing her audience. It was a pity; but after all there is little harm done. Miss Annie Irish has so much in her favour—beauty with intelligence, youth with experience—that she can afford to bide her time. One only criticism we would make: Let her, above all things, avoid speaking too well. We English pronounce our mother-tongue very roughly, and are almost more ready to forgive even the dropping of an *h* than the pedantry of the pronouncing dictionary.

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When he recovers—as recover we sincerely hope he will, and soon—that spirited young actor Mr. Forbes Dawson will enjoy, more keenly than most men, the hoax unintentionally played on one or two newspapers of last week. The "Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News" and the "Echo"—and probably half a dozen others—published circumstantial accounts of his death, with brief summaries of a career which, indeed, many of his friends believed to be closed for ever. But newspapers cannot kill; and we hope that Mr. Dawson has many a year of merriment and energy before him.

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After a lull of three weeks or so, an outbreak of new productions—hardly any of which are new plays—threatens us from every side. The "Taming of the Shrew" will, indeed, have been performed at the Globe before these lines are in print; "Cyril's Success" is to begin at the Criterion on Saturday; Mrs. Langtry starts her season with "As you Like It," next Tuesday; Mr. Alexander opens the Avenue with a new farcical comedy, "Doctor Bill," adapted by Hamilton Aidé, on the first; and Miss Cissie Grahame is soon to show us of what mettle Mr. Jerome K. Jerome is made, at Terry's Theatre.

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"Costumes of the Modern Stage" is a title which ought in itself to recommend a new publication to all readers of the costumed sex. When we add that Mr. John C. Nimmo's new journal is devoted entirely to feminine stage dress (and that French) we have said enough to show that its coloured plates—*hand-coloured*, if you please, says Mr. Nimmo—are the very latest authorities on fashion. As a final inducement, let us add that they are wholly distasteful to our eyes—for we are æsthetic and they are fashionable—and we are sure that we shall have materially increased the circulation of the journal in which they appear.

### THE BEETHOVEN HOUSE SCHEME.

Sir George Grove presided over a meeting at the German Athenæum, Mortimer-street, on Saturday afternoon, called to aid the Beethoven House Society. Among those present were Herr von Ernsthausen, the German Consul, Mr. Otto Goldschmidt, Mr. Oscar Berringer, Mr. Geo. Herbert, Mr. Arthur Chappell, and Mr. Ludwig.

The Chairman said they were there to consider how they should best do honour to Beethoven in connection with the purchase of his birthplace in Bonn and its conversion into a Beethoven Museum. Everybody in England interested in music would be very much disappointed if not enabled in one way or another to testify the strong enthusiasm in favour of Beethoven that there was in this country. A plan was proposed by Mr. Ludwig which would enable them to have their part in the establishment of this house without in any way wounding the susceptibilities of their friends, the Germans. The Beethoven Society was founded in Bonn in 1889, its main objects being the acquisition, by purchase, restoration, fitting up, and keeping in good order and repair the house in which Beethoven was born; the collection of manuscripts, portraits, busts, and relics of Beethoven, of the various editions of his composition, and of literary works concerning Beethoven; the periodical publication of interesting matter relating to Beethoven; and the use of the house as a centre for musical purposes. Professor Dr. J. Joachim was hon. president of the society for life. Prince Bismarck and Count Moltke were the extraordinary honorary members; and amongst the honorary members were the following residents in England:—Sir G. Grove, Sir C. Hallé, Prince Victor of Hohenlohe, Signor Piatti, and Professor C. V. Stanford. As soon as 3,000 shares had been placed, a general meeting would be called, and thereafter an annual general meeting would be held. The property of the society was indivisible, and in case of the dissolution of the society the

members renounced any claim to the property, which would be transferred to the Municipality of the town of Bonn, on their undertaking to maintain Beethoven House, with all its contents, for the purposes to which it had been dedicated, and to employ any surplus of income for the benefit of musicians in need of assistance. The society numbered about 180 members. The house had been purchased, and its restoration and fitting up had been begun. The society had also, by gift or purchase, acquired several letters of Beethoven, a sketch of a quartette in his own hand, an original clean copy of the two quartetts dedicated to Prince Galitzin, corrected by Beethoven himself, a number of relics, and several portraits of the master. An *édition de luxe* of the cantata, "Der Glorreich Augenblick" (originally presented to King Frederick William III. of Prussia), of which only two other copies exist, formed a chief ornament of the small library; four ear-trumpets, hitherto preserved in the Royal Library in Berlin, had been made over to the society; which possessed, likewise, the last grand piano made by Graf, in Vienna, for Beethoven. The Philharmonic Society of London had presented a cast of Schaller's bust of Beethoven in their possession (applause). Concerts had been given in various towns in aid of the society, notably in New York and Antwerp. By order of the German Emperor a representation of "Fidelio," in aid of the funds of the society, had been given at the Opera House in Berlin. Professor H. Herkomer, R.A., had presented the society with a valuable oil painting, which was exhibited that day (applause). A Beethoven Exhibition had been planned for this year in Bonn, to which, by permission of the Prussian Minister of State, the Royal Library in Berlin would send Beethoven's stringed instruments, manuscripts, and other relics, and to which many contributions had been promised by private collectors. There would be one or more concerts in combination with this exhibition, at which, amongst others, Frau Schumann and Professor Joachim had promised to perform (applause).

Mr. Ernsthausen moved: "That this meeting pledges itself to make known the objects and aims of the Beethoven House Society as widely as possible."

Mr. George Herbert seconded the resolution, which was adopted.

Mr. Ludwig said their cause might seem to be a German one, but it was also the cause of musicians and music-loving people, because Beethoven belonged to the whole musical world. Should they, in this country alone, stand back when all others joined hands in order to preserve the spot where Beethoven first saw the light of day? He thought not. He proposed "That it is desirable that an orchestral concert be given in the course of the present season in London, under the directorship of Professor Joachim, the proceeds to be handed over to the Beethoven House Fund."

Mr. Otto Goldschmidt seconded the resolution, which was adopted.

A committee having been appointed to carry out the necessary arrangements, a vote of thanks was passed to Sir George Grove, and the meeting terminated.

### NOTES FROM ITALY.

(FROM AN OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENT.)

MILAN, JAN. 19.

During the past week the "Meistersinger" has been replaced by "Simon Boccanegra," one of Verdi's earlier productions, which he has, however, revised and altered. This opera is a success—there have been already three representations; artists, scenery, and general *mise en scène* are praised alike. After each performance the ballet "Devadacy" is given, which, with the exquisite dancing of La Giuri, forms an immense attraction.

To-day (19th), on account of the death of Prince Amadeo, La Scala is closed. For the same reason the second concert of the Campanari Quartett has been postponed.

The evening of Friday, 17th, witnessed the third concert of the Società del Quartetto, which consisted solely of a vocal recital by Mr. and Mrs. Henschel. The programme included Cimarosa, Pergolesi, Paisiello, Handel, as well as composers of more modern schools. Mrs. Henschel's singing pleased greatly, and she was especially admired for her rendering of Handel's "Heracles" Aria, Mendelssohn's "Auf Flügeln des Gesanges," and of her part in the duets by Cimarosa and Paisiello. Mr. Henschel's merits as an artistic interpreter, and an almost unrivalled accompanist also met with due recognition.

Certain lovers of music inquire: "When will the Società del Quartetto give us an orchestral concert?" There have been no orchestral concerts at Milan this winter.

## BANQUET TO DR. E. H. TURPIN.

The complimentary banquet given to Mr. Edmund Hart Turpin, to celebrate the bestowal upon him by the Archbishop of Canterbury of the Degree of Doctor of Music, took place at the Holborn Restaurant, on Wednesday evening, Sir John Stainer presiding. In proposing the toast of the evening, Sir John gave, in very felicitous terms, a short biography of the eminent musician, to whose many admirable qualities he bore fitting testimony. To his friend's eulogy, Dr. Turpin replied in a most feeling speech, which was warmly received by the distinguished and thoroughly representative audience present, and which included Dr. Bridge, Mr. W. H. Cummings, Mr. A. J. Hopkins, Dr. Troutbeck, Mr. J. G. Curwen, Mr. Walter Macfarren, Mr. G. A. Osborne, the Rev. H. G. Bonavia Hunt, Mr. John Thomas, and Mr. C. E. Stephens. To say that the "evening was most enjoyable" is a hackneyed but expressive method of indicating the perfect harmony which prevailed throughout the whole proceedings, which were, indeed, a most gratifying testimony to the honourable esteem in which Dr. Turpin is held by his brother musicians. The musical arrangements were in the hands of Dr. J. F. Bridge, under whose efficient direction an interesting programme was well performed. The vocalists were Madame Clara Samuëll and Miss Dora Barnard, while Mr. W. S. Hoyte and V. P. Sharman played pianoforte solos respectively. A charming song from Dr. Turpin's pen, "Donald Gray," was sung by Madame Samuëll, and Dr. Bridge's humorous part song, "Bold Turpin," inscribed to the new doctor, was also given with other choral numbers by a picked choir from the Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral, whose admirable singing contributed not a little to the evening's pleasure.

## MADRIGALS AT BRISTOL.

The fifty-fourth "Ladies' night" of the Bristol Madrigal Society, which fell on the 16th, was one of the greatest successes ever achieved by that time-honoured body. The items were well chosen with a view of giving the audience an opportunity of comparing the various schools of madrigal writers—English, French, Italian, and Flemish. Interest was intensified by the insertion in the programme of a couple of unfamiliar compositions of old writers of this form of music, together with three recently written pieces. Palestrina's "O, say what nymph," for ten voices, received its initial representation in Bristol, and met with moderate success. It was well sung, with the exception of a little straining on the part of the tenors to reach the highest notes; but broad and well conceived though the piece is, its character is such that it is not likely to become a favourite in Bristol. "Ye singers all," of Hubert Waelrant, and an excellent example of the Antwerp composer, was also sung by the society for the first time, and gained a cordial reception. Dr. A. King, of Brighton, sent in a cleverly-written part song, entitled, "Music, when soft voices die," which, had it contained one verse instead of two, would have been rightly styled a madrigal. It is well within the compass of the voices, and contains some charming imitative writing. The choir sang it well-nigh faultlessly, and the item won warm encomiums. The other two new compositions, the handiwork of two talented ladies both associated with the western city, were given a reception which must have been particularly gratifying to the writers. "Sweet is my love" by Miss Lilian Blair-Oliphant is striking because of its easy flowing and captivating melody. "Bring the Bright Garlands," a happy setting in the form of a four part song of Tom Moore's lines, is from the pen of Miss Ellicott. It is bright, full of melody, very descriptive, and displays much knowledge of part-writing. Both ladies, who were present, bowed from the tribune where they were seated in acknowledgment of the hearty plaudits with which the examples of their skill were received, and the pieces were repeated. Mention should be made of the admirable rendering of Mendelssohn's hunting song, "Now Morning Advancing," a second performance of which was demanded and given. All the other items in the programme are more or less familiar to frequenters of these annual meetings, and they may be dismissed with the mere mention of the fact that they were sung in a manner worthy of the songs. Mr. D. W. Rootham on this occasion completed twenty-five years of service as conductor of the famous body of madrigal singers, and he, the president, the hon. secretary, and the members generally are to be congratulated on the admirable results achieved.

## CONCERTS.

## POPULAR CONCERTS.

Mr. Stavenhagen introduced a work of the ultra-romantic type into the popular programme of last Saturday with an altogether extraordinary amount of success. It would be a dangerous experiment for a mediocre artist to play a Liszt Rhapsody before a classical and (in popular belief) a severely conservative audience; but Liszt, played as he should be, and as few can play him, was warmly appreciated, and heartier applause is rarely heard than was called forth by the perfect rendering of his enormously difficult Rhapsody in C sharp minor. The Rhapsody was preceded by Chopin's Prelude in D flat, and followed (as an encore) by one of Paganini's Caprices transcribed by Liszt. In Beethoven's Trio in C minor, from Op. 1, Mr. Stavenhagen was associated with Madame Neruda and Signor Piatti. In the first and last movements of this work the freshness and ardour of the young pianist lent a peculiar charm of its own to the performance. Mr. Norman Salmond a baritone with a fine voice and an excellent method, made a very favourable impression. Miss Carmichael, who accompanied, might, we fancy, have added to the success of the second song, Hamish MacCunn's, "Pour forth the wine," if she had infused a little more boldness into the vigorously written accompaniment. Madame Neruda played the Adagio from Spohr's 9th Concerto—an old favourite—accompanied by Mdlle. Olga Neruda; and the opening Quartet was Mozart's, in G major, from Op. 10, Mr. Straus being the violist.

The lack of variety and absence of novelty in Monday's programme were doubtless responsible for the very scanty audience, for although exception could hardly be taken to any of its items considered individually, the sameness of their character, combined with the familiarity which in musical matters sometimes engenders weariness, failed to make the concert attractive to *habitues*. The two principal concerted works presented were Beethoven's early Quartet in G and the Pianoforte Trio in E flat, op. 70; the former perfectly played by Mme. Neruda, MM. Ries, Straus, and Piatti, and the latter with less success by Mme. Neruda, Miss Fanny Davies, and Signor Piatti. The Quartet is a very charming example of Beethoven's early manner, but the unmistakable influence of Mozart deprives it of distinctive interest, and the Trio, though full of charming detail and expressive melody, lacks the impress of the powerful individuality which distinguishes the other productions of the master's second period—in this respect a marked contrast to the companion work in D. Mendelssohn's early and unimportant "Tema con Variazioni," for pianoforte and violoncello, was finely rendered by Miss Fanny Davies and Signor Piatti. Miss Davies for her solo played Chopin's Ballade in F minor in her best manner, and as an encore Chopin's Etude in C sharp minor, which she invested with much poetic significance. Madame Bertha Moore sang very successfully M. V. White's "Ye Cupids, droop each little head," but her rendering of Grieg's "Solvejg's Song" left much to be desired both with regard to expression and intonation.

## ALBERT HALL.

The Royal Choral Society gave a very fine performance of the "Elijah" on Wednesday to a large and appreciative audience. The chorus singing throughout fully sustained the high standard of excellence attained under the able direction of Mr. Barnby. A more dramatic and impressive rendering of the Baal choruses has probably seldom been heard, while equally high encomiums are merited by the admirable rendition of the more lyrical numbers. Miss Monteith made a decided success in the trying opening solo in the second part, and throughout enhanced by much artistic taste the beauty of a sympathetic soprano voice. Madame Belle Cole sang with her usual artistic intelligence and success, Miss S. Berry also gave a most effective rendering of the somewhat ungrateful alto solo, "Woe unto them," and Miss M. Harwood's clear tones were heard to advantage in the part of the Youth. Mr. Henschel's impersonation of Elijah was a thoroughly artistic conception carried out with all the ability of an accomplished vocalist. Mr. Henry Piercy again proved himself to be a competent

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vocalist, as did also Mr. E. Houghton and Mr. H. Cross in the concerted music. A special word of thanks is due to Mr. Barnby for his firm refusal to a prolonged demand for an *encore* of the quartett, "Cast thy burden," and to Mr. Hodge for his admirable use of the great organ.

### FOREIGN NOTES.

The unveiling of the monument to Weber at Eutin (his birthplace) will take place on June 30. The occasion will be celebrated by two concerts (one sacred, one secular) and the customary speechifying, &c. A celebration in honour of Weber without the performance of any of his operas is a little too much like the traditional performance of "Hamlet" with the chief part left out. But it is not to be doubted that what Eutin cannot do in this respect will be done with all honour in scores of other German towns.

Herr Hans v. Bülow celebrated his sixtieth birthday on the 8th inst. by conducting a concert at Hamburg, on which occasion he was made the recipient of honours and favours of all kinds. The subscribers to the concerts presented him with a purse of 10,000 marks (£500), which the great conductor desires to be devoted to charitable purposes; and Herr Brahms sent him the original manuscript score of his own 3rd Symphony in F, a noble gift indeed, but one which must be almost superfluous to its recipient, who has no doubt had every note of the work in his head for some years past.

The result is just announced of the competition for the Beethoven composition prize instituted by the "Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde" of Vienna. The amount, 1,000 florins, is to be equally divided between Herr Julius Zellner (of Vienna) for a piano-quintett and Herr Emanuel Tjuka (also of Vienna) for a suite for stringed orchestra. A sextett by Ludwig Thuille (of Munich) was also declared worthy of a prize, and this gives the author the right to compete again in 1891 with the same work. It appears that 22 composers sent in works, among which were 5 symphonies, 2 overtures, 4 orchestral pieces of various kinds, 6 pieces of chamber music, a clarinet-concerto, an opera, and 3 choral works. We shall be curious to know whether the competition system is more successful in Vienna than it has hitherto been in London in developing latent musical ability; but it may be said that Messrs. Zellner and Thuille are already composers of some reputation.

The late Peter Cornelius's comic opera, "Der Barbier v. Bagdad," was produced in New York on Boxing Day, and very favourably received. In how many more towns shall we have to announce the production of this opera before it is brought out in London? Scarcely a week passes without its being played for the first time somewhere, yet we hear no talk of it in London.

Professor Ernst Rudorff has resigned the conductorship of the famous Stern'sche Gesangverein of Berlin. Here also, as in the case of Herr Max Bruch, there seems to have been some unpleasantness.

Deaths of persons distinguished in the musical world continue to happen with quite remarkable frequency. This week we have to announce the death of Hans Matthison-Hausen (d. 7th Jan., b. 6th Feb., 1807), once the most famous of Danish organists, and composer of an oratorio, "Johannes," and much other sacred music. On the 12th died Mme. Peschka-Leutner, a lady who had long enjoyed a very great popularity in Germany as a "coloratur-sängerin" or bravura singer. She sang a few times in this country, especially with the German Opera Company at Drury Lane in 1882, when she played the part of Eglantine in Weber's "Euryanthe." The "Ménestrel" also announces the death "recently" of Balthasar Saldoni (b. 1807), a distinguished Spanish musician, who, besides many Italian operas and Spanish zarzuelas, wrote a great deal of sacred vocal music, an orchestral symphony, "A mi patria," and many occasional pieces of instrumental music. Besides his musical compositions he published a biographical dictionary of Spanish musicians, in 4 vols., under the title of "Efemerides de Musicos Españoles."

### PROVINCIAL.

MANCHESTER.—A drawing-room concert was given on the 14th inst. in connection with the Gentlemen's concerts. The programme, consisting of three instrumental pieces, proved one of the most enjoyable within our recollection of these admirable concerts. Schubert's Grand Octett in F, Op. 166, was admirably played by Messrs. Hess, S. Spielman, Spielman, Vieuxtemps, T. Hoffmann, A. Hoffmann (Clarinet), Paersch (Horn), and Lalande (Bassoon). This exquisite work is rarely played, but when given with the perfect ensemble attainable only by artists who have had many opportunities of playing together no greater treat is conceivable. Beethoven's String Trio in C minor, Op. 9, an early work in the composer's first manner, was none the less acceptable on that account. It is thoroughly Beethovenish at times, and its many beauties were rendered in finished style by Messrs. Hess, Spielman, and Vieuxtemps. Mr. Willy Hess played Saint Saën's Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 28, in addition to taking part in both concerted pieces, his performances being most successful throughout. Sir Charles Hallé's twelfth concert introduced no absolute novelties, though Berlioz' "Romeo and Juliet" Symphony, with its charming "Queen Mab" Scherzo, and Wagner's Overture to "Rienzi" were probably new to most of the present subscribers. The Symphony has not been given here for seven, and the Overture for fourteen years; but, judging by the reception accorded them, an early repetition of both these interesting works would be acceptable. Herr Stavenhagen played Liszt's Concerto in E flat and the 12th Rhapsodie with great brilliancy; but Chopin's Prelude in D flat was the most generally admired, both as a composition and as a charming example of refined playing carried to its utmost limit. With the exception of his fortissimo octave playing, the effect of which is positively obnoxious to us when produced by a rigidly stiff wrist, Herr Stavenhagen's touch and interpretation were such as only artists in the first rank can ever hope to attain. M. Blauwaert was again the vocalist, and repeated (by desire) Bach's "O nymphes des bois," in addition to songs by Benoit and Huberti. Handel's "Theodora" will be repeated at the next concert.

GLASGOW.—The ninth subscription concert of the Glasgow Choral and Orchestral series on Monday evening last proved to be in many respects the most interesting and successful concert of the season. Frederic Cliffe's Symphony, produced last April at the Crystal Palace was the chief novelty in the programme. It received an excellent rendering from the orchestra under Mr. Manns. The work itself has been so fully criticised in this journal that we need only now record its remarkable success on this occasion. Every movement was warmly applauded, and at the end of the performance the enjoyment with which it had been listened by the large and representative audience was amply manifested in enthusiastic demonstrations of approval. Herr Stavenhagen was the soloist of the evening, and his marvellously fine rendering of Liszt's Concerto in A and the same composer's "Joachim" Rhapsody excited his hearers to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. In response to an undeniable encore he played a prelude of Chopin with an intensity of passionate expression, a richness and variety of tone, and perfection of execution such as we have not heard excelled by any living pianist but Rubinstein. The orchestral items of the programme included Cherubini's overture to "Anacreon," which received an exceptionally brilliant and finished interpretation from Mr. Manns and the band. At the Saturday Popular Concert Miss Emily Squire made a highly successful *début* in Glasgow, and sang several songs of Schumann and Grieg with much acceptance. Her voice is fresh and pure, and her intonation faultless, in addition to which she gives evidence of sympathetic and artistic feeling and refined taste. Next week Mr. Henschel is announced to appear at the subscription concert.

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